



LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C1292 - Zhang Xuan's Decision



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“Wintry Spirit Essence?” Zhang Xuan did not expect the other party to offer him a gift after apologizing. He froze for a moment before taking a glance at the jade bottle.

The jade bottle was not too big, but there was a freezing air emanating from it, threatening to freeze someone into an ice cube at any moment. At the same time, spiritual energy even more concentrated than concentrated high-tier spirit stones could be felt pulsating within the jade bottle.

Even though Zhang Xuan had never heard of the item before, he could tell at first glance that it was something extraordinarily valuable. With just the spiritual energy contained inside, he would have no trouble pushing for a breakthrough to Half-Leaving Aperture realm. In fact, even reaching Leaving Aperture realm with it did not seem impossible.

"That's right. Zhang shi, please do accept it. It's a token of my goodwill," Chen Leyao urged anxiously.

Since she had cultivated the cultivation technique that Zhang Xuan had altered, that made the young man a half-teacher to her. On top of that, the young man was the teacher of their young court chief.

Had she not thought that the young man was trying to chat her up and attempted to make a move, Zhang Qian would not have been drawn in, and the whole string of trouble would not have happened.

No matter what, she had to make it up to the other party.

"This..." Zhang Xuan blinked blankly.

Previously, Zhao Xingmo had spoken of the matter with extreme graveness, urging him to admit his fault and apologize, making it seem as if the young ladies from the Glacier Plain Court were terrifying monsters. But from how he saw it, they seemed rather easy to approach, and they were very cordial. It was completely unlike what Zhao Xingmo had said earlier!

Seeing that Zhang Xuan was still hesitating, Chen Leyao thought that he was still angry, and she urged him anxiously. "Zhang shi, we won't be able to rest well if you refuse to accept our gift..."

"This... Alright then. Since it's a token of your goodwill, I won't hold back!"

Judging from the other party's attitude, it felt that she would never let him go if he refused her gift, so he could only helplessly reach out to take the jade bottle.

Relief visibly flashed across Chen Leyao's face for a moment. "Thank you for your understanding, Zhang shi."

Since the young man was willing to accept her gift, she saw this as a sign that he was willing to put aside their differences and forgive her.

"You're too polite." Zhang Xuan clasped his fist in response. Then, with a slightly perplexed tone, he asked, "I was rather impolite to you earlier as well, so why would... you all apologize to me instead?"



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He could not make sense of the situation.

It was just a moment ago that the other party had been so furious that she had wanted to make a move on him, but a few minutes later, she suddenly approached him to give him a gift.

Even for a change of mind, that was way too fast!

"This..." Chen Leyao and the others glanced at one another, and bitter smiles surfaced on their lips.

"It's because..."

Just as she was about to begin explaining, the ruckus in the surroundings abruptly vanished, to the point where one could even hear a pin drop. Following which, three figures flew over from the distance and stopped in the air above the square, emanating powerful auras.

All three of them were old men. Zhang Xuan found himself unable to gauge how powerful they were, but the powerful auras that they emanated left one feeling as if they could tear a person apart with just a glare.

Beneath his sleeves, Zhang Xuan clenched his fists tightly. *They possess even greater power than Luo Chengxin.*

Luo Chengxin was a Saint 7-dan expert, so did that mean that those three in the sky were at Saint 8-dan?

With such strength, they could already be ranked at the top of the Master Teacher Continent!

Zhao Xingmo sent a telepathic message to Zhang Xuan to explain the situation. "They are the elders of the Sanctum of Sages, and they are in charge of invigilating the final selection."

"I see..." Zhang Xuan nodded in response.

As expected of the Sanctum of Sages! The strength of their elders was really at a wholly different level!

"Candidates!" The old man standing at the very front spoke. "The three of us will be overseeing the selection this time around. I am 8-star Master Teacher Liu Haoyu, and you can address me as Elder Liu. The esteemed gentleman on my left is Elder Han Zhu, and the one on my right is Elder Lin Qing."

His voice was not particularly loud, but it resounded clearly in everyone's ears. It felt like even if one were cover one's ears, the voice would still resonate right within one's mind, preventing one from shutting it off altogether.

Demonic tunist... and a particularly high-ranked one at that! Zhang Xuan noted with a grim expression.

As a demonic tunist himself, he was able to tell that there was something amiss with the other party's voice. He had already comprehended the level of 'the greatest sound is silence, and the greatest form is formless'.

For even the simplest words to wield such strength... If the elder tapped into the power of his Primordial Spirit as well, most probably, every single person standing in the square would be put into a trance immediately.

A Saint 8-dan master teacher was indeed frightening. Even a casual gesture from them could wield so much power.

"I believe the guides should have informed you all of the entrance examination to our Sanctum of Sages—challenging the Mountain Gate," Elder Liu said as he grabbed at the space in front of him.

Huala!

A massive gate abruptly warped into appearance before the crowd. A brilliant light shimmered within the gate, making it impossible for one to tell what was on the other side.

“Could this be... a Teleportation Formation for living beings?” Zhang Xuan was taken aback.

Legend had it that 8-star formation masters were capable of not just transmitting holograms and words but even lifeforms.

The gate before his eyes caused significant disturbances in space, and it felt as if stepping in would bring him into a whole new world. Chances were that it was the legendary Teleportation Formation that he had heard so much about.

“It’s indeed a Teleportation Formation.” Zhao Xingmo confirmed Zhang Xuan’s supposition. “The Mountain Gate examination won’t be held within the Sanctum of Sages but a unique folded space. A Teleportation Formation is required in order to enter the area.”

“Folded space?” Zhang Xuan pondered for a moment before nodding.

Based on what he had heard about the Mountain Gate so far, it sounded far more complex than the Caged Battle Royale. Considering how there were over ten thousand candidates participating in the final selection simultaneously and each candidate would face a test unique to them, space was bound to be a huge problem. However, if the test were to be conducted in a folded space, everything would make sense.

He had a folded space himself too, the Qiu Wu Palace. As such, he was rather familiar with it.

“In the Mountain Gate examination, the difficulty will be altered based on your individual capability. Each person will be faced with tests vastly different from others’, so there’s no point taking the experiences of preceding candidates as reference,” Elder Liu advised, gazing down upon the crowd. “You just have to try your best and deal with whatever comes before you to the best of your ability.

“As for the tabulation of the results, there’s no need for you to worry about that. The Sanctum of Sages has a unique artifact known as the Jade Tablet of Trials, and it will make a fair evaluation of your performance in the tests based on established criteria. The higher you are scored, the more likely you will pass the examination.

“This year, the Sanctum of Sages will be taking in five hundred students. So, we will only be taking in those who score within the top five hundred.”

“The Sanctum of Sages is only accepting five hundred students this year?”

“But there are at least ten thousand people here! Five hundred... Isn’t that one in twenty?”

“It really won’t be easy!”

...

Hearing how competitive the final selection would be, unease and trepidation could be seen on most of the faces among the crowd.

At the same time, Zhang Xuan could not help frowning as well.

Those who were currently standing in the square were all the top geniuses gathered throughout the Master Teacher Continent, experts among experts. To finish in the top five percent of them all was truly no easy task.

It was no wonder Zhao Xingmo had said that it was possible for not even a single one of them to make the cut. Considering the harsh requirements, it was indeed not easy to succeed.

Even Zhang Xuan did not have absolute confidence in the final selection.

In a sense, this was a testimony to the strength of the Sanctum of Sages.

If every single batch of candidates of the Sanctum of Sages had to go through this harsh selection, just how powerful would those who managed to stay till the end be?

“Zhao shi, what is the Jade Token of Trials?” one of the master teachers asked Zhao Xingmo with a perplexed look on his face.

“In the Mountain Gate examination, each individual will be faced with different tests. For example, if a Primordial Spirit realm advanced stage cultivator and a Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle cultivator encounter a Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle saint beast and defeat it, naturally, the Primordial Spirit realm advanced stage cultivator will be awarded with more points. The Jade Token of Trials is a unique artifact that serves to tabulate

these deeds into a score before compiling them into a scoreboard. The higher one's score is, the better one's final result will be!" Zhao Xingmo explained.

"I see..." Everyone nodded in realization.

"Then... other than defeating saint beasts, what else in the tests will add to our score?" another master teacher asked.

Since the Jade Tablet of Trials worked by converting accomplishments into a corresponding score, it stood to reason that there was an established system for its calculation. As stated previously, there were many different tests, so not all of them would be concerning saint beasts. Surely, there should be other ways of earning points too.

"So far, some of the known possible tests are defeating saint beasts, breaking through a formation, sensing danger in advance, and lecturing a crowd. As long as you perform well in these tests, you will be able to earn some points. Other than that, skillful utilization of one's capability in some unique occupations will also earn one bonus points, such as in spirit enchantment, terpsichorean arts, and painting. As long as you display proficiency exceeding that of the other candidates, those could be considered as accomplishments as well, and the Jade Tablet of Trials will take them into account," Zhao Xingmo explained.

"In other words, as long as you possess a skill that others don't have and perform it in the tests, they will be noted down by the Jade Tablet of Trials and added to your final score, thus helping you stand out from the other candidates!"

Hearing those words, the crowd could not help but clench their fists tightly in agitation.

As easy and fair as the test might have seemed, it was actually far more difficult than it sounded.

If one was competing with just a couple of people, one was bound to have a skill that stood out from the others. However, amid a crowd of over ten thousand geniuses, any seemingly outstanding capability would only appear ordinary in comparison.

Someone might be good at painting, but there was bound to be another one amid the group who was better at it than that person. The same went for the other occupations.

As the saying went, 'there is always a mountain higher than the one before you'. It was definitely no easy feat to reach the peak.

"The capabilities one can display aren't just limited to hard skills. Outstanding management and leadership skills can also add to one's score, but of course, those might be harder to display. The aim of the Sanctum of Sages is to further the wisdom of mankind, thus bringing mankind to reach greater heights. Naturally, the benchmark for enrollment is much higher than other academies."

Seeing the tensed look on the faces of the group, Zhao Xingmo chuckled softly to alleviate the atmosphere. "However, there's no need to worry. Just as I have said before, as long as you work hard and perform to the best of your abilities, your shine will definitely catch the attention of the Sanctum of Sages!"

"Yes!" The group nodded before falling into deep contemplation to figure out what their outstanding traits were.

Zhang Xuan also stroked his lower jaw and pondered. A while later, he could not help but shake his head—he did not seem to have any outstanding traits at all!

Lecturing, formation deciphering, terpsichorean arts, painting... While he was rather proficient in all of those, those could not be considered his specialty!

For example, his painting—while he had achieved a level of proficiency comparable to ordinary 8-star primary painters, the geniuses of the Painter Guild that were participating in the final selection were bound to be able to outdo him.

The same went for pill forging, smithing, and the like.

His mastery of those supporting occupations could be considered outstanding among master teachers, but to those who truly devoted their lives to those arts, it was inevitable that he would still be lacking.

Well, if I really have to choose a specialty... that would probably be disguising! Zhang Xuan thought.

His supporting occupations were all so-so, roughly around the same level. There were none that particularly stood out.

If he really had to list a strength that he was proud of, that would be ‘acting like an expert’!

After all, his disguise as ‘Yang Xuan’ had been able to fool even Luo Chengxin. So far, he had never made any major slip-ups in his disguise before, and that should be more than enough to show his incredible aptitude in the art!

Just that... will acting like an expert really add to my score? Zhang Xuan’s face collapsed.

It was hard to imagine any formal academy that would take into account one’s ability to act as an expert as one of its entrance criteria!

It seemed like his strongest capability would not be able to help him here.

Forget it. If it comes down to it, I’ll just execute a couple of my less outstanding techniques. As long as I utilize enough of them, I should be able to acquire a decent score, Zhang Xuan

thought.

No matter what, he was determined to enter the Sanctum of Sages. This was the road leading him to Luo Ruoxin, and he could not let the journey end just here.

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